

This week's recipes

In the final episode in the series, James Wong shows how vegetables can be used to make natural remedies.

Artichokes are used to make a tasty snack which could make a great addition to a low cholesterol diet.

Sticking plasters that could help relieve aching muscles are made from chillies, and garlic is used to make a footbath and a preparation that could help treat athlete's foot.

As a beauty treat, James shows how cucumbers can be used to make a soothing eye gel.

These recipes are taken from the book 'Grow Your Own Drugs', published by HarperCollins.

Artichoke and hawthorn bar for healthy cholesterol

4 artichokes litre water g hawthorn berries (if using dried hawthorn berries, first cover them with water for 24 hours to rehydrate them) g sugar cinnamon stick Juice of 1 lime

1. Chop the artichokes, place in a saucepan, cover with the water and boil for 10 minutes, or until cooked. Remove from the heat, then leave to steep for 20 minutes. Strain into a bowl.
2. Heat the oven to 100C.
3. Place the artichoke infusion, hawthorn berries, sugar and cinnamon stick in a pan, and bring to the boil. Simmer gently for 15-20 minutes, or until the mixture is soft. Take out the cinnamon stick and blend in a liquidizer with the lime juice, then pour into greased, lined baking trays to a thickness of about 1 cm.
4. Dry in the heated oven for 2-3 hours.(Check after 2 hours; you want it to be chewy, but not too tough.) Leave to cool, then slice into bite-sized pieces.

USE: Chew on a piece of fruit bar whenever you like.

NB If high blood cholesterol is suspected, you must see a doctor. This recipe may be used in addition to, not as a substitute for, proper medical treatment. If you are on other heart medication you shouldn't eat hawthorn berries. The remedy is not suitable if you are diabetic.

STORAGE: Keep in greaseproof paper in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

Chilli plasters for muscle sprains

200 g orange Scotch Bonnet chillies tbsp mustard powder g coconut oil, non-fractionated tsp beeswax packs Melolin wound dressing pads, 10 x 10 cm packs adhesive wound dressing, 12 x 12 cm

1. Wash and finely slice the chillies. Combine the chillies and mustard powder with the coconut oil in a saucepan. Cover to keep in the vapour and gently heat for 2 minutes. Leave to cool with the

lid on.

2. Put the chilli mix into muslin over a sieve and squeeze out the oil into a bowl below. Place the oil back into the saucepan and return to the heat.
3. Add the beeswax to the oil and heat very gently until dissolved; this will take less than 2 minutes. Remove from the heat.
4. Soak the dressing pads in the oil mixture while it's still hot. When they are saturated, remove the pads and leave to stand for 10 minutes on greaseproof paper, or until set.
5. Once set and dry, the pads can be layered on top of each other, wrapped in clingfilm and stored in the refrigerator until needed.

USE: Place a pad on an adhesive wound dressing, then apply to the affected area. Keep the area warm (by covering with a blanket, for example) and leave on for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

STORAGE: Keeps for 1 year in the refrigerator.

Garlic vinegar footbath

2 bulbs garlic Cider vinegar (or whatever you have) heads fresh lavender Sage leaves

1. Drop the garlic into a jug and cover with vinegar, using roughly twice as much vinegar as garlic.
2. Crush the sage leaves with a pestle and mortar, and add them along with the lavender heads to the jug.
3. Pour your mixture into an airtight container, making sure you have enough vinegar to totally cover the other ingredients.
4. Infuse the mixture for between 2 weeks and a month. Simply add 5 tablespoons to a hot footbath and soak your foot when required.

USE: Dilute 5 tblsp of the mixture in a washing up bowl (size) of hot water, and soak the feet for at least 10 minutes each day for 3 times a week for 2 weeks.

STORAGE: Keep in a sealable container or jar in a dry, cool place for up to 6 months

Garlic talcum powder for athlete's foot

4 tbsp dried sage leaves 1 tbsp dried garlic (commercially prepared is fine) 1 tbsp (70 g) cornflour 1 tbsp (70 g) bicarbonate of soda drops tea tree oil

1. Grind the dried sage in a mortar and pestle, then place in a medium-sized bowl. Add the dried garlic. Sprinkle over the cornflour and bicarbonate of soda and mix well.
2. Add in the tea tree oil and stir until well distributed. Place the powder into a salt or sugar shaker for use.

USE: Dust on liberally 3 times daily, until symptoms disappear (usually a few weeks). Continue using for 1 week after all signs of infection are gone, as previously dormant fungal spores can cause reinfection.

STORAGE: Keep in a dry, dark place and use within 1 year.

Cucumber Eye Gel

1 small cucumber, chopped aloe vera leaf sachet vegetable gelatine ml distilled extract of witch hazel
BP white tea teabag drops peppermint essential oil

1. Roughly chop the cucumber. Peel and slice the aloe leaf to extract its gel. Put the cucumber and aloe gel into a blender and process until smooth. Strain the mix through a sieve to extract the juice. Measure out 100 ml of the strained juice and set aside.
2. Add the witch hazel to a pan, whisk in the gelatine and add the teabag. Gently heat the mixture until it just starts to thicken. As the mixture cools, take out the teabag, then whisk in the cucumber and aloe juice mixture and the peppermint oil.
3. Bottle up the gel in a sterilized, airtight pump dispenser.

USE: Apply to the eye area before bed, then wash off in the morning.

STORAGE: Keeps in the refrigerator for up to 6 weeks.